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MEETING OF CHIEFS OF STATE AND HEADS OF GOVERNMENT
Paris, May, 1960



MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: May 14, 1960
Time: 3:00 P.M.
Place: Quai d'Orsay

Participants:

The Secretary of State
Foreign Secretary Lloyd
Foreign Secretary Couve de Murville
Foreign Minister von Brentano

(See additional list at end of memorandum.)

Subject: Foreign Ministers' Meeting - Germany and Berlin

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After welcoming the Foreign Ministers, Mr. Couve de Murville reported that the Soviet Embassy had requested the French to admit a GDR delegation during the Summit meeting. The Soviets justified their request by saying that there was a West German delegation in Paris. The French had replied that they saw no need for the presence of a GDR delegation. They assumed the matter would rest there. Khrushchev might, however, raise the matter again on Monday. The Czechs had previously requested, without success, that the French issue visas to a GDR delegation. The other Ministers concurred in this course of action.

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Mr. Couve de Murville then referred to the new Soviet proposal for an interim agreement on Berlin, which had been distributed in the Working Group on Germany including Berlin the day before. He explained that the Soviet Ambassador had called on de Gaulle to deliver a message from Khrushchev and had left the Soviet paper at the same time. It was believed that the paper had been given to de Gaulle because Khrushchev had discussed the question of an interim agreement with de Gaulle and had said that a paper would be provided later.

Mr. von Brentano noted that the proposal corresponded to the Soviet proposal of July 28, 1959 but that it contained additional negative aspects. For example, the purpose of the interim agreement was stated to be the establishment of a free city of West Berlin and the failure of the suggested all-German committee to make progress would be followed not by new negotiations, as called for in the earlier proposal, but by the conclusion of a peace treaty or peace treaties. The new proposal seemed to represent a complete presentation of maximum Soviet demands.

Mr. Couve de Murville said he found little new in the proposal. It was a little more specific than the Soviets had been at Geneva, but the problem of what would come after the expiration of the agreement remained.

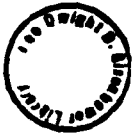
Mr. Lloyd commented that the whole basis of the discussion of an interim agreement on Berlin at Geneva had been that negotiations would be resumed after the expiration of the agreement. In this sense, the new proposal was a step backward.

Mr. von Brentano agreed that the key question was that of the duration of the agreement and what would come after it. Under the new proposal, Soviet demands would have to be met. When the agreement expired, a free city would be established and the Western Powers would have obligations with respect to a peace treaty.

Secretary Herter circulated copies of a preliminary analysis which the U.S. had made of the points of difference between the earlier Soviet proposal (that of July 28, 1959) and the new one. He thought the Soviets were probably trying to make concessions on some minor points, but their position on the major points would make agreement impossible.

Mr. Couve de Murville said that what was of decisive importance in the Summit discussion was not the precise number of troops, etc., but rather the question of what would happen at the end of an interim agreement. The other Foreign Ministers concurred.

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Secretary Herter said that there remained two questions to be dealt with: first, the question whether there should be an interim arrangement for a term of years or continued negotiations in another forum; and second, the polishing up of the Western proposal of July 28, 1959. He noted that the Working Group had prepared a draft directive and declarations.

Mr. Lloyd said it was unlikely that Khrushchev would agree to the referral of the Berlin question to another body without any discussion at the Summit of the substance of an interim arrangement.

The Secretary observed that the Soviet readiness to accept a two-year agreement might have some tactical significance. Khrushchev might wish to move quickly away from the subject of a peace treaty. He might thus hope to evade the plebiscite question.

Mr. von Brentano said that the new Soviet proposal contemplated a final rather than a temporary agreement on Berlin. Recalling that the Western Powers had modified the term "interim agreement" to "arrangement", he commented that the Three Powers, if they discussed the new proposal with the Soviets, would in effect be talking about a definitive solution. It was not desirable to discuss Berlin on this basis.

Mr. Lloyd noted that the Soviets would probably publish their proposal and that it would then be necessary for the Western Powers to comment on it. He was not suggesting that the Western Powers publish an alternative proposal of their own, but rather that they prepare arguments against the Soviet proposal. For example, they might ask what would happen with respect to West Berlin.

Mr. Herter referred to the "Essential Conditions of a Berlin Arrangement" which the Foreign Ministers had already approved and said that these were, in effect, the Western argument.

Mr. Conve de Murville said he understood that the Western Powers could not put forward a counterproposal, but that they should not discuss the Soviet proposal in detail. The main question for discussion at the Summit was whether or not there was agreement on basic principles.

Mr. Lloyd replied that he felt that it was necessary to have arguments against the Soviet paper. The Western Powers should also have their own paper on a Berlin arrangement ready, certainly not for tabling early in the Summit discussions but for possible later tactical use.

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Mr. von Brentano agreed that, if the Soviet proposal were published, the Western Powers should not publish a counter-proposal of their own but should put forward arguments against the Soviet proposal.

With respect to the revision of the Western proposal of July 28, 1959, Secretary Herter noted that the Working Group had revised the last sentence of paragraph (e) to read "The rights of the Western Powers in and relative to Berlin and access thereto shall remain unaffected by the conclusion or eventual modification or termination of this agreement" and that the British and French had raised the question whether this sentence was necessary at all.

Mr. Lloyd said it would be better to leave the sentence out if there were a real possibility Khrushchev were ready for such an arrangement, but that it would be better to leave the sentence in if the paper were simply put forward as a propaganda gesture at the end.

Mr. Couve de Murville agreed that it was essentially a question of tactics. Basically, he said, the Western position was their July 28 paper.

Mr. von Brentano agreed that the sentence might be left out if there were a possibility of real discussion, but that this question should not be prejudged and that the sentence should be left in at this time.

Secretary Herter said that Mr. Lloyd had raised an important question, namely what Western arguments could be made publicly as soon as the new Soviet proposal is published. At his suggestion, the Foreign Ministers agreed that the Working Group should prepare such arguments.

Mr. Lloyd said that points which might be included were that Berlin cannot remain a "free" city without the presence of Allied troops, that the Soviet proposal prejudged what would happen when the agreement terminated, and the Western arguments on an all-German committee (which he believed were well presented in the Secretary's speech of August 5, 1959).

With respect to an all-German committee, Mr. von Brentano said it remained his Government's view that the German question should be discussed among the Four Powers, with German consultants to be called on as necessary.

Following the discussion of Germany and Berlin there was a brief exchange of information on the arrangements for the Western Heads of Government and the East-West Summit meetings.

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Cleared by: Mr. Hillenbrand

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Additional Participants

United States

Mr. Merchant
Mr. Kohler
Mr. Achilles
Mr. Irwin
Mr. Bohlen
Mr. Hager
Ambassador Dowling
Mr. Smith
Mr. Berding
Mr. Hillenbrand
Mr. McSweeney
Mr. McKiernan

United Kingdom*

Ambassador Jebb
Mr. Rumbold
Mr. Hoyer-Millar
Mr. Russell

France*

Mr. Carboneol
Mr. Seydoux
Ambassador Alphand
Mr. Laloy

Federal Republic of Germany*

Ambassador Blankenhorn
Mr. Carstens
Ambassador Grewe
Mr. von Eckhardt
Mr. Weber

*Seated at table. There were additional British, French, and German advisers present.

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